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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION SR-05

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 AID-07 INR-10 OIC-02 CIAE-00 EB-08  
EA-10 10-18 NEA-06 NSAE-00 HA-06 TRSE-00 VO-08  
OMB-01 RP-10 AGR-01 SP-02 /089 M  
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P 280759Z JUN 81

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0907  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 08266

E.O. 12065: GDS 6/28/87 (RATTRAY, AL) OR-M  
TAGS: SREF, EAID, PK, AF  
SUBJECT: AFGHAN REFUGEE RELIEF: TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

REF: (A) STATE 162465 (B) ISLAMABAD 7021

1. (C) - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ENBOFFS CALLED UPON CHIEF COMMISSIONER FOR AFGHAN  
REFUGEES BRIGADIER SAEED AZHAR TO DISCUSS CONCERNS RAISED  
IN REF A. ACCORDING TO AZHAR, PRESIDENT ZIA HAS PERSON-  
ALLY ORDERED THE NATIONAL LOGISTICS CELL (NLC) TO PROVIDE  
ALL SUPPORT, MAINTENANCE, AND COOPERATION THAT  
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE MIGHT NEED IN TRANSPORTING RELIEF  
GOODS TO PAKISTAN'S ESTIMATES  
TWO MILLION AFGHAN REFUGEES.  
COST FOR NLC'S SERVY CES WILL COME OUT OF RELIEF ADMINIS-  
TRATION BUDGET.

3. NLC CURRENTLY MAINTAINS FIFTEEN KOREAN-BUILT TRUCKS  
DONATED BY ROK AND HAS WORKED OUT SYSTEM TO MAINTAIN  
AND OPERATE FIFTY IN-BOUND ISUZU TRUCKS DONATED BY JAPAN.  
ISUZU SPARES ARE TO BE PURCHASED WITH FUNDS FROM JAPAN'S  
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DOLS 1.1 MILLION TRANSPORTATION CONTRIBUTION.

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ON: 08-01-2001

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4. THE BRIGADIER EMPHATICALLY REPEATED HIS ASSERTION THAT RELIEF EFFORT'S TRUCKING COSTS COULD BE REDUCED BY AS MUCH AS THREE-FOURTHS IF NLC WERE ABLE TO OPERATE FLEET OF DONATED TRUCKS. EXORBITANT AND EVER-INCREASING RATES CHARGED BY THE INDEPENDENT TRUCKING FIRMS WERE ONEROUS BURDEN FOR GOP TO BEAR. AZHAR SAID AMERICAN TRUCKS WITH A CARRYING CAPACITY OF 8-16 TONS WOULD PRESENT NO PROBLEM FOR NLC'S MAINTENANCE CAPABILITIES SO LONG AS SOME FUNDING FOR SPARES WAS ALSO AVAILABLE. DONATION OF 200-250 U.S.-BUILT TRUCKS WOULD IN EFFECT STANDARDIZE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION FLEET ON AMERICAN TRUCKS. AZHAR INDICATED THAT PARTICULAR BRAND OF TRUCKS WOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE AS LONG AS TRUCKS CAME WITH MINIMUM NUMBER OF FRILLS (E.G., RADIOS, AIR CONDITIONERS, POLLUTION CONTROL DEVICES, AND WAS COMPLETED UNIT WITH CANVAS TOP AND BUILT-UP SIDES. TRUCKS SHOULD, ACCORDING TO AZHAR, BE DIESEL-POWERED AND COULD COME EITHER IN 4X2 OR 4X4 MODE; THE FORMER HAVING ADVANTAGE OF LOWER OPERATING COSTS AND EASIER MAINTENANCE, THE LATTER BEING BETTER SUITED TO EXTREMELY RUGGED ROAD CONDITIONS EXISTING NEAR MANY OF THE NEARLY THREE HUNDRED REFUGEE CAMPS.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY SUPPORTS BRIGADIER AZHAR'S CONTENTION THAT A DONATION OF U.S.-BUILT TRUCKS WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER REFUGEE RELIEF TRANSPORT COSTS. NLC CURRENTLY MAINTAINS A LARGE NUMBER OF HEAVY MERCEDES AND SAVIER TRUCKS AND SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF MAINTAINING U.S. TRUCKS. (CAPABILITY OF NLC CAN BE CONFIRMED THROUGH DOD). PAK MILITARY STILL OPERATES LARGE NUMBERS OF U.S. MADE TRUCKS, AND AMERICAN MOTORS JEEPS ARE ASSEMBLED  
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IN KARACHI -. U.S. VEHICLES ARE NO STRANGERS TO PAKISTAN. THERE MAY BE SOME UNFORESEEN DELIVERY OR TECHNICAL RISK, BUT WE THINK THAT TRUCK DONATION OPTION IS: (A) BETTER CHOICE THAN PAYING UNVERIFIABLE AND, IN MOST CASES, EXORBITANT TRUCKER FEES, (B) GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE U.S. IMAGE AMONG REFUGEES, (C) CERTAIN TO BENEFIT U.S. BUSINESS AND  
DBOR, AND (D) LIKELY TO ASSIST  
GOP OVER MULTI-YEAR PERIOD. USAID LOGO OR OTHER SYMBOLS PAINTED ON TRUCKS IDENTIFYING THEM CLEARLY AS

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PART OF U.S. RELIEF EFFORT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOP. AZHAR POINTED OUT THAT JAPANESE VEHICLES DONATED FOR RELIEF EFFORT BORE INSCRIPTIONS DESIGNATING THEM FOR AFGHAN REFUGEE RELIEF AND IDENTIFYING DONOR COUNTRY.

6. COMMERCIAL TRUCKING CONTRACTS IN PAKISTAN ARE NOT BASED ON COMPETITIVE BIDS. WHEREVER POSSIBLE TRUCKERS (ALMOST INVARIABLY PATHANS) RIG PRICE TO GET WHATEVER MARKET CAN BEAR. DEPARTMENTS DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS OF COMPARATIVE COSTS OF COMMERCIAL TRUCKING CONTRACTS IS UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE REALISTIC IN CONTEXT OF PREVAILING TRANSPORTATION PRACTICES IN PAKISTAN.

7. REFUGEE ADMINISTRATION IS AGREEABLE TO U.S. TRUCK DONATION PROPOSAL AND WE BELIEVE THAT NECESSARY FORMALITIES CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH NOTE TO RFA. HUMMEL

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